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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

INTRODUCTION

1. Following the adoption of resolution 770 (1992) on 13 August 1992, a number of the co-sponsors of that resolution communicated to me views about how the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Sarajevo and other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina could be facilitated through the provision of protective support by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). In essence, their view was that this function could be added to UNPROFOR's mandate and carried out by military personnel, under the command of the Force Commander of UNPROFOR, operating in accordance with the established principles and practices of United Nations peace-keeping operations. Some of the Member States concerned indicated that they were ready to provide the necessary military personnel, equipment and logistic support at no cost to the United Nations.

2. I welcomed this approach, especially as regards its financial aspects, and instructed my staff to discuss it in greater detail with the Member States concerned, with a view to formulating proposals which I could present to the Security Council. The present report contains such proposals.

I. CONCEPT OF OPERATION

3. These proposals, which have been discussed with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and enjoy her support, recognize UNHCR's role as the lead agency for humanitarian activities in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. UNPROFOR's task, under its enlarged mandate, would be to support UNHCR's efforts to deliver humanitarian relief throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in particular to provide protection, at UNHCR's request, where and when UNHCR considered such protection necessary.

4. It would remain UNHCR's responsibility, as at present, to determine the priorities and schedules for the delivery of such relief, to organize the relief convoys, to negotiate safe passage along the intended routes, with UNPROFOR's assistance as required, and to coordinate requests from non-governmental organizations and other agencies wishing to join UNPROFOR-protected convoys. UNHCR, after consulting UNPROFOR, would decide which convoys needed protection, and protection would be provided only at UNHCR's request. Other humanitarian agencies seeking UNPROFOR's protection for their deliveries of relief supplies would have to address their requests to UNHCR.

5. UNHCR would establish regional storage and distribution centres at 11 locations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as follows:

(a) With access from Croatia: Banja Luka, Bihac, Mostar, Sarajevo, Vitez;

(b) With access from Serbia/Montenegro: Bilece, Foca, Gorazde, Vlasenica;

(c) With access from both: Doboj, Tuzla.

6. UNPROFOR would, when so requested by UNHCR, provide protection of convoys to UNHCR's regional centres and from them to local distribution points. UNPROFOR would also assume responsibility for the protection of United Nations facilities, including UNHCR storage centres, if so requested by UNHCR.

7. The military elements added to UNPROFOR would include a transport battalion which would be at the disposal of UNHCR for the delivery of relief supplies along routes determined by UNHCR, after consultation with UNPROFOR, to be particularly difficult. In other cases, UNHCR trucks with civilian drivers would constitute the convoy but would be escorted by UNPROFOR military vehicles and personnel.

8. Operational decisions relating to a protected convoy, including action to be taken in the event that the convoy encountered obstacles, would be the responsibility of the commander of the UNPROFOR escort, who would, where possible, consult the senior UNHCR representative in the convoy before taking such decisions. The relationship between UNPROFOR and UNHCR would be comparable to that developed for the Sarajevo airport operation.

9. In providing protective support to UNHCR-organized convoys, the UNPROFOR troops concerned would follow normal peace-keeping rules of engagement. They would thus be authorized to use force in self-defence. It is to be noted that, in this context, self-defence is deemed to include situations in which armed persons attempt by force to prevent United Nations troops from carrying out their mandate. These considerations are particularly relevant in the current tense situation in the proposed area of operations. The Security Council's approval of the recommendations contained in this report would mean that the number of troops and other UNPROFOR personnel deployed in Bosnia and

Herzegovina would be increased by a factor of four or five. It is therefore essential that all parties uphold the undertakings they have made and cease forthwith their attacks on United Nations personnel and property. Should this not occur, the Security Council would have to consider what further steps might be necessary to ensure UNPROFOR's security and enable it to fulfil its mandate.

10. It is envisaged that UNHCR's expanded programme of humanitarian relief deliveries, with UNPROFOR's protection as required, would deliver some 5,000 tonnes a week to those in need in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

11. Following the agreement at the London International Conference on the unconditional and unilateral release, under international supervision, of all civilians detained in detention camps, the question has arisen of the security of those who would be released. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has expressed concern at the risks to which those detainees who wished to leave Bosnia and Herzegovina might be exposed while being taken from the camps and detention centres to places of refuge in neighbouring countries. UNPROFOR does not at present have the resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina to undertake the protection of such persons except on a very limited basis. However, should the Security Council decide to expand the mandate and strength of UNPROFOR as recommended in this report, the additional resources provided to it could also be used to protect convoys of released detainees if the ICRC so requested and if the Force Commander agreed that the request was practicable. In taking action on this report, the Council may wish to authorize UNPROFOR to undertake this function.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE OPERATION

12. Overall command and control of the operation would be exercised by the Force Commander of UNPROFOR. A new Bosnia and Herzegovina Command would be established within UNPROFOR at the two-star level, with its headquarters at Sarajevo. This Command would assume responsibility for all peace-keeping operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. the current operation at Sarajevo airport, the protective support of humanitarian convoys and of released detainees, the work of United Nations military observers deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina under the original UNPROFOR mandate (currently only at Bihac) and the supervision of the parties' heavy weapons, should the Security Council assign this further task to UNPROFOR.

13. UNPROFOR's Bosnia and Herzegovina Command would consist of:

(a) Sector Sarajevo, commanded as at present at the one-star level, to continue performing the tasks arising from the 5 June agreement and authorized by resolutions 758 (1992) and 761 (1992);

(b) Four or five new zones, the precise locations of which would be determined after further consultation with UNHCR. Possible centres for them include Banja Luka, Bihac, Doboj, Gorazde, Mostar, Tuzla and Vitez. In each

zone there would be an infantry battalion group, whose headquarters would also need to include civilian staff to undertake political and information functions and liaison with UNHCR. It is envisaged that approximately 20 international Professional staff, 18 General Service and 10 local staff would be required for these functions, with an additional 20 international civil administration personnel and 12 local staff for administrative support tasks. (The possibility of a small reduction in these numbers will also be studied by the advance party proposed in paragraph 16 below.)

14. The UNPROFOR units in the new zones would need to have a high degree of self-sufficiency, possessing their own front-line and second-line logistic capacity, subject to decisions by the planning party on what logistic support they could obtain from UNPROFOR's existing logistic structures. In addition, UNPROFOR's Bosnia and Herzegovina Command would need an engineer bridging company, medical evacuation capability and an integral communications unit. A total of 80 additional United Nations military observers would also be required for patrolling, liaison, negotiation and ad hoc humanitarian tasks.

15. To summarize the above requirements, UNPROFOR would need to be augmented by the following, in addition to its present strength in Sarajevo:

(a) Four or five infantry battalion groups, each including a headquarters and a headquarters company, two armoured reconnaissance companies, two armoured infantry companies, an engineer sub-unit for route and mine clearance and ordnance disposal and logistic capability as described above;

(b) A transport battalion of some 500 all ranks with 100 trucks and an adequate maintenance capacity;

(c) A medical evacuation capability;

(d) An engineer bridging company;

(e) A signals unit for communications within and between the zones and headquarters;

(f) Eighty United Nations military observers;

(g) Approximately 80 civilian staff members.

16. As soon as the Security Council has taken action on this report, I shall ask the Member States contributing additional elements to UNPROFOR to form a joint planning team. This team will proceed to Zagreb and finalize, in consultation with the Force Commander and his staff and with representatives of UNHCR, plans for implementing the concept described in this report, especially as regards the deployment of the additional elements and their logistic support.

III. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

17. In consultations with Member States who have expressed an interest in contributing military personnel, equipment and logistic support to UNPROFOR for this operation, I have made it clear that my recommendation to the Security Council for UNPROFOR's mandate to be enlarged in this way would be based on the assumption that all such resources would be provided at no cost to the United Nations and that the contributing countries, or other Member States on a voluntary basis, would cover the additional administrative expenses which would be incurred by the United Nations. It would be necessary to confirm that sufficient funds were available from these sources before the additional troops could be put in place.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

18. The concept described in this report seems to me to provide the best possibility for ensuring increased deliveries of humanitarian relief to the suffering people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It would assure the Security Council's control of the operation, while at the same time avoiding the imposition of additional financial burdens on the Organization. I therefore recommend that the Security Council approve the expansion of UNPROFOR's mandate and strength, on the basis of the plan described above, to provide protective support for UNHCR-organized humanitarian convoys throughout the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.